



Senate

General Assembly

File No. 175

February Session, 2010

Substitute Senate Bill No. 353

Senate, March 29, 2010

The Committee on Human Services reported through SEN. DOYLE of the 9th Dist., Chairperson of the Committee on the part of the Senate, that the substitute bill ought to pass.

AN ACT ADOPTING A FOSTER PARENT BILL OF RIGHTS.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Assembly convened:

1 Section 1. (NEW) (*Effective October 1, 2010*) (a) There is established a
2 foster parent bill of rights for any person who is licensed as a foster
3 parent by the Department of Children and Families. The foster parent
4 bill of rights shall require the department to:

5 (1) Treat foster parents with consideration and respect;

6 (2) Notify the foster parent of meetings scheduled by the
7 department concerning the foster child in order to allow the foster
8 parent to actively participate and have input into the case-planning
9 and decision-making process regarding the foster child;

10 (3) Provide the foster parent with support services to assist in the
11 care of the foster child that are consistent with the foster child's
12 approved permanency plan;

13 (4) Provide the foster parent open, complete and timely responses to
14 requests;

15 (5) Provide the foster parent with timely information concerning the
16 foster child's medical history, general behavior and relationships with
17 other foster parents, as permitted under state and federal law;

18 (6) Provide the foster parent with timely information concerning the
19 educational history, life experiences and placement circumstances of
20 the foster child, as permitted under state and federal law;

21 (7) Provide the foster parent information on all department policies
22 and procedures that relate to the role of a foster parent;

23 (8) Provide the foster parent appropriate training to enhance
24 relevant skills and abilities of the foster parent;

25 (9) Provide the foster parent (A) information on services that are
26 available through the department, and (B) contact information that
27 allows the foster parent to contact the department twenty-four hours,
28 seven days a week;

29 (10) Provide an opportunity for the foster parent to be heard
30 regarding department decisions and practices, and not retaliate against
31 a foster parent who questions or appeals a decision or practice of the
32 department;

33 (11) Provide the foster parent with notice of the right to petition the
34 Superior Court as described in subsection (b) of this section; and

35 (12) Provide the foster parent a copy of the foster parent bill of
36 rights when a child is placed in foster care with the foster parent and
37 upon request of the foster parent.

38 (b) Any licensed foster parent aggrieved by a violation of this
39 section may petition the Superior Court for the venue district provided
40 in section 46b-142 of the general statutes within which the foster parent
41 resides for appropriate relief, including temporary and permanent

42 injunctive relief. Such petition shall be treated as a juvenile matter.

This act shall take effect as follows and shall amend the following sections:		
Section 1	October 1, 2010	New section

Statement of Legislative Commissioners:

A new subdivision (11) was added, the remaining subdivision was renumbered, and the section was separated into subsections (a) and (b) for clarity.

HS *Joint Favorable Subst.-LCO*

The following Fiscal Impact Statement and Bill Analysis are prepared for the benefit of the members of the General Assembly, solely for purposes of information, summarization and explanation and do not represent the intent of the General Assembly or either chamber thereof for any purpose. In general, fiscal impacts are based upon a variety of informational sources, including the analyst's professional knowledge. Whenever applicable, agency data is consulted as part of the analysis, however final products do not necessarily reflect an assessment from any specific department.

OFA Fiscal Note

State Impact:

Agency Affected	Fund-Effect	FY 11 \$	FY 12 \$
Judicial Dept. & Off. Atty. Gen.	GF - None	None	None
Children & Families, Dept.	GF - See Below	See Below	See Below

Note: GF=General Fund

Municipal Impact: None

Explanation

Allowing an aggrieved foster parent to petition the Superior Court for relief could result in a few additional hearings that would take place in Juvenile Court. No overtime or personnel cost is anticipated to result for the Judicial Department or the Office of the Attorney General to handle any such cases.

The twelve rights listed in the bill are sufficiently similar to standards adhered to by the Department of Children and Families (DCF) to preclude a significant fiscal impact from any court ordered relief.

The DCF will incur a minimal cost (less than \$50) to reproduce the bill of rights for distribution to foster homes. The department will incur no fiscal impact to participate in any resulting court hearings.

The Out Years

The annualized ongoing fiscal impact identified above would continue into the future subject to inflation.

OLR Bill Analysis**sSB 353*****AN ACT ADOPTING A FOSTER PARENT BILL OF RIGHTS.*****SUMMARY:**

This bill establishes a bill of rights for the state's licensed foster parents. The bill of rights specifies what actions the Department of Children and Families (DCF) must take to support these parents. It authorizes foster parents who believe DCF has violated these rights to petition the Superior Court for relief.

EFFECTIVE DATE: October 1, 2010

FOSTER PARENT BILL OF RIGHTS

Under the bill of rights, DCF must provide the foster parent:

1. consideration and respect;
2. notice of meetings DCF schedules concerning the foster child to enable the parent to actively participate and have input into the case-planning and decision-making process for the child;
3. support services to assist in the child's care that are consistent with the child's approved permanency plan;
4. open, complete, and timely responses to requests;
5. timely information on the child's medical history, general behavior, and relationships with other foster parents, as the law allows;
6. timely information on the child's educational history, life experiences, and placement circumstances, as the law allows;
7. information on all DCF policies and procedures related to their

- role;
8. appropriate training to enhance his or her relevant skills and abilities;
 9. information on available DCF services and contact information for reaching DCF at any time;
 10. an opportunity to question or appeal DCF decisions and practices (about which DCF may not retaliate);
 11. notice of the parent's right to petition the Superior Court in certain circumstances; and
 12. a copy of the bill of rights when the child is placed with the parent and when the parent requests one.

The bill provides that any foster parent aggrieved by a violation of the bill can petition the Superior Court for appropriate relief, including temporary and permanent injunctions. These petitions are treated as juvenile matters.

BACKGROUND

Juvenile Matters

Juvenile Matters is a subdivision of Superior Court designed to protect the rights of children, family relationships, and confidentiality. All court documents are confidential and juvenile court hearings are closed to the public.

COMMITTEE ACTION

Human Services Committee

Joint Favorable

Yea 16 Nay 3 (03/11/2010)